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**Abstract Title:** Beyond the Civil Rights and Cultural Competence: The Use of Critical Race Theory in Health Disparity Research

**Abstract:** Research suggests that racism may contribute to racial and ethnic health disparities. A literature review was conducted to characterize current research on the topic. Findings illustrate that studies examining the relationship between racism and health vary in their research question and methodology. A key finding reveals that a few attempts have been made to conceptualize racism in health research; however, researchers often examine the concept without clearly articulating a theoretical position. This has significant consequences for the development and success of health disparity research. Consequently, a theoretical position is needed in health disparity research that includes racism as a construct of interest. Critical Race Theory (CRT) is recommended as a useful framework for discussing these findings. CRT originated among legal scholars of color and challenges racial orthodoxy, traditional civil rights, and stagnate views of equality. Major themes extracted from CRT note the centrality of race in any discussion of inequality and identify pathways which racism can harm health. Another review finding suggests that quantitative methods are overwhelmingly employed in the research on racism and health. CRT offers methodological insights that highlight the importance of achieving social justice by elucidating the perceptions and experiences of racism among racial and ethnic minorities.